

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 COME-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 /069 W

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R 080515Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY DOHA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0652

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

C O N F I D E N T I A L D O H A 0 8 1 3

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: BEXP, QA

SUBJ: BROWN AND ROOT OFF TO BAD START IN QATAR

1. PROMINENT LOCAL CONTRACTOR HAS GIVEN US ACCOUNT OF WHAT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN GENERALLY COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE VISIT TO QATAR BY BROWN AND ROOT REPS (REPS DID NOT CALL AT EMBASSY). SOURCE, WHO HAS ASSISTED BROWN AND ROOT IN PAST AND IS INTERESTED IN REPRESENTING FIRM HERE, NOTED THAT VISIT WAS IN CONNECTION WITH COMPANY'S INTEREST IN \$500 MILLION NGL PROJECT TO BE CONSTRUCTED FOR QATAR GAS CO. SOURCE SAID THAT REPS, WHO WERE FROM BROWN AND ROOT'S BAHRAIN OFFICE, FIRST MET WITH AMIR'S TECHNICAL ADVISOR, A FORMER BROWN AND ROOT EMPLOYEE WHO PLAYS MAJOR ROLE IN AWARDING OF MAJOR GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS. DURING MEETING, SOURCE SAID REPS INSISTED ON APPOINTMENT WITH AMIR. AFTER BEING TOLD THAT AMIR DOES NOT MAKE PRACTICE OF RECEIVING FOREIGN BUSINESSMEN, REPS ATTEMPTED BYPASS TECHNICAL ADVISOR ASKING AMIR'S OFFICE MANAGER (AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION) TO ARRANGE AUDIENCE. HE DECLINED AND WAS INFORMED BY REPS THAT SHAYKH ISA OF BAHRAIN WOULD CONTACT THE AMIR, SHAYKH KHALIFA, AND USE HIS INFLUENCE TO SEE THAT COMPANY GOT CONTRACT HERE.

2. ACCORDING SOURCE, WHO HAS CLOSE PERSONAL RELATIONS WITH

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TECHNICAL ADVISOR AND OFFICE MANAGER, BOTH WERE UPSET BY

BROWN AND ROOT REPS CAVALIER ATTITUDE AND TREATMENT OF THEM AS OFFICE BOYS. HE SAID REMARK ABOUT SHAYKH ISA'S INFLUENCE MOST UNFORTUNATE GIVEN STRAINED RELATIONS BETWEEN QATAR AND BAHRAIN. HE ADDED THAT DELEGATION FROM BROWN AND ROOT HEADQUARTERS IN HOUSTON EXPECTED IN DOHA SOON, AND EXPRESSED OPINION THAT WHILE COMPANY STILL IN RUNNING AFTER VISIT BY BAHRAIN CONTINGENT, SIMILAR PERFORMANCE WOULD SEAL FIRM'S FATE HERE.

3. COMMENT: WE UNABLE TO CONFIRM ABOVE ACCOUNT WHICH SOURCE SAID HE RECEIVED DIRECTLY FROM OFFICE MANAGER AND TECHNICAL ADVISOR. IF ACCURATE, HOWEVER, WE DEFINITELY AGREE THAT BROWN AND ROOT HAVE PUT THEMSELVES BEHIND EIGHT BALL. BOTH OFFICIALS ENJOY CONFIDENCE OF AMIR AND HAVE CONSIDERABLE AUTHORITY IN CONTRACT NEGOTIATION. IT UNLIKELY THAT FIRM WHICH WINDS UP ON WRONG SIDE OF THEM WILL DO MUCH BUSINESS HERE.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: WOULD APPRECIATE IT IF MANAMA COULD CONTACT BAHRAIN OFFICE OF BROWN AND ROOT AND SUGGEST THAT REPS CALL AT EMBASSY IF THEY VISIT QATAR AGAIN. IN LIGHT OF POSSIBLE VISIT BY TEAM FROM HOUSTON, WE REQUEST SAME MESSAGE BE PASSED TO THEM EITHER DIRECTLY BY DEPT OR THROUGH BAHRAIN OFFICE.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 JUL 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975DOHA00813
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750234-1049
From: DOHA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750774/aaaacnxd.tel
Line Count: 86
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <01 AUG 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <24 NOV 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BROWN AND ROOT OFF TO BAD START IN QATAR
TAGS: BEXP, QA
To: STATE MANAMA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006